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Madison Village police chief pleased with portable radar speed sign

By Bill DeBus bdebus@news-herald.com @bdebusnh on Twitter Jan 31, 2020 Comments



Madison Village's portable radar speed sign displays the speed of a passing vehicle in the 400 block of North Lake Street on Jan. 30.

Madison Village's portable radar speed sign has been working well since the community's Police Department began using it about seven months ago.

That's the assessment of village Police Chief Troy McIntosh.

Village Councilman H.O. "Jay" Adams, during the Jan. 27 council meeting, asked McIntosh for an update on the sign's operation.

The chief offered a positive review.

“So far, we’ve been happy with the performance of the sign,” McIntosh said.

Madison bought its portable radar speed sign, as well as related software and brackets, for \$3,270 from [A & A Safety](#). Village Council [approved the purchase](#) on March 18, a few months after a resident of Hyder Drive complained about cars frequently speeding on his street.

[Hyder Drive](#) was the first place where Madison police used the speed sign.

The sign recorded speeds of northbound and southbound vehicles during two separate seven-day stretches on Hyder in late May and early June. However, based on the results during the time vehicles were monitored, McIntosh said it didn’t seem to indicate that there was a real speeding problem on Hyder Drive.

“If you go down near the sign, you see a lot of brake lights, people realizing exactly what their speed is and what the speed limit is in that area. I think that’s its greatest value so far, is just awareness and a deterrent.”

Police Chief Troy McIntosh

Similar conclusions have been reached about other streets in the village where the sign has tracked the speed of passing cars.

“None of the locations it’s been at have we recognized a serious speeding problem or anything like that,” McIntosh said.

The portable speed sign is attached with a mounting bracket to existing speed-limit sign posts. Passing motorists see a digital readout of their actual speed and how it compares to the posted speed limit on the permanent sign. Most recently, the sign has been monitoring the speed of southbound vehicles in the 400 block of North Lake Street as they approach Main Street.

“It’s been in the location where it’s at for a little longer than I thought it was going to,” McIntosh said. “The battery (that powers the sign) seems to be holding up better than maybe I thought with the cold.”

Portable speed signs such as the one purchased by Madison are useful tools for police departments that want to monitor and detect patterns on vehicle speeds in their communities. The departments then can use the data to help make the best use of officers’ time if they’re assigned to stationary surveillance for speeders.

The signs also allow police to use laptop computers, smartphones or tablets to download statistics — such as number of vehicles with speeds recorded; speeds and times recorded; average overall speeds; and peak vehicle speed — gathered at test sites for quick analysis.

Wherever the portable speed sign has been posted around the village, it seems to have “a calming effect,” McIntosh observed.

“If you go down near the sign, you see a lot of brake lights, people realizing exactly what their speed is and what the speed limit is in that area,” he said. “I think that’s its greatest value so far, is just awareness and a deterrent.”